

The Posting of Workers Directive: British Jobs for British Workers?

Ian Fitzgerald/Lucinda Watson

The European Union Posting of Workers Directive (96/71/EC) is a significant piece of legislation, particularly for the European construction sector, but it is still little known in the UK. Of note however in 2008/09 was the slogan, coined by Gordon Brown, 'British Jobs for British Workers' and the industrial disputes at the Lindsey Oil Refinery. At the centre of these disputes was the Directive and widespread fears that four key European Court of Justice Decisions (Viking, Laval, Ruffert and Luxembourg) would undermine the fragile state of industrial relations in engineering construction. This presentation is based on research undertaken for an EU funded European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW) project. The project as a whole investigated the living and working conditions of posted workers in 10 European countries and the author was the UK national expert. The session will in particular introduce the Directive, report back some of the key UK findings and pose questions that can only be answered through a multi-disciplinary approach.